

Random Encounters

Denizens of Stone Bog

By Skip Williams



Beware the Ghouls

If a party wins past the gargoyles at the fringes of the bog and presses on, they eventually find a dell littered with all manner of toppled headstones, broken monuments, and ruined mausoleums. Shallow pits, now mostly filled with forest debris, are all over the place.

The cemetery's resident ghouls dug the pits years and years ago. They also toppled all the monuments and broke open all the mausoleums. Today, there isn't an intact corpse left in the whole place.



The ghouls tend to hide in the deepest corners of the ruined mausoleums during the day. At night they creep about the headstones, hunting for meals. They remain alert around the clock, however, and soon see or hear anyone entering the dell.

When a potential meal comes along, the ghouls and the ghast that leads them carefully emerge from their hiding places using a network of crude tunnels they've dug over the years. They try to remain unseen as they encircle the intruders. They skulk behind the dell's trees and headstones and try to get as close as they can before attacking. The ghast tries to move toward the center of any opposing group, so as to catch as many foes as possible with its stench. The ghouls simply swarm over anyone they can reach, but they try to stick fairly close to the ghast.

If turned, these undead creatures flee into the nearest mausoleum or pit. If pursued, they scamper out via a tunnel and keep fleeing until the turn effect wears off. The moment they're free of a turn effect, they resume the attack.

No valuables remain in the dell (except for the bracers the ghast wears). The undead tend to leave trinkets on the surface, where the green dragon Wrinestii (see Green Death, part 4) can find them.

Advanced Ghast: CR 4; Medium-size undead; HD 6d12; hp 39; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16; Atk +6 melee (1d8+1, bite) and +4 melee (1d4, 2 claws); SA paralysis, stench; SQ create spawn, turn resistance +2, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 17, Con --, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Escape Artist +9, Hide +5, Intuit Direction +3, Jump +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +11, Search +7, Spot +8; Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (bite), Weapon Finesse (claw).

Paralysis (Ex): Anyone hit by an advanced ghast's bite or claw attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 17) or be paralyzed for 1d6+4 minutes. Even elves are vulnerable to this paralysis.

Stench (Ex): The stink of death and corruption surrounding a ghast is sickening. Living creatures within 10 feet must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 17) or be wracked with nausea, taking a -2 circumstance penalty on all attacks, saves, and skill checks for 1d6+4 minutes.

Create Spawn (Su): In most cases, advanced ghaunts devour those they kill. From time to time, however, the bodies of their humanoid victims lie where they fell, to rise as ghaunts in 1d4 days. Casting *protection from evil* on a body before the end of that time averts the transformation.

Turn Resistance (Ex): An advanced ghast is treated as an undead with 8 Hit Dice for the purpose of turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts.

Undead Traits: An advanced ghast is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. An advanced ghast cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if it is willing. The creature has darkvision (60-foot range).

Possessions: +2 bracers of armor.

Advanced Ghoul: CR 2; Medium-size undead; HD 3d12; hp 19; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, bite) and +0 melee (1d3, 2 claws); SA paralysis; SQ create spawn, turn

resistance +2, undead traits; AL CE; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 13, Dex 15, Con --, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Escape Artist +8, Hide +3, Intuit Direction +3, Jump +6, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Search +7, Spot +8; Multiattack, Weapon Finesse (bite).

Paralysis (Ex): Anyone hit by an advanced ghoul's bite or claw attack must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 14) or be paralyzed for 1d6+2 minutes. Even elves are vulnerable to this paralysis.

Create Spawn (Su): In most cases, advanced ghouls devour those they kill. From time to time, however, the bodies of their humanoid victims lie where they fell, to rise as ghouls themselves in 1d4 days. Casting *protection from evil* on a body before the end of that time averts the transformation.

Turn Resistance (Ex): An advanced ghoul is treated as an undead with 5 Hit Dice for the purpose of turn, rebuke, command, and bolster attempts.

Undead Traits: An advanced ghoul is immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. It is not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. An advanced ghoul cannot be raised, and resurrection works only if it is willing. The creature has darkvision (60-foot range).

Bringing the Parts Together

As the gargoyles from The Gargoyles of Stone Bog (part 1) do, the ghast and its pack of ghouls occasionally leave the bog and go in search of prey. The ghouls may also be drawn to the scene when a party battles the gargoyles at the fringes of the bog.

Coming in Part 3 of Denizens of Stone Bog
Take a look at the mummies of the bog!

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